

Homer Eaton

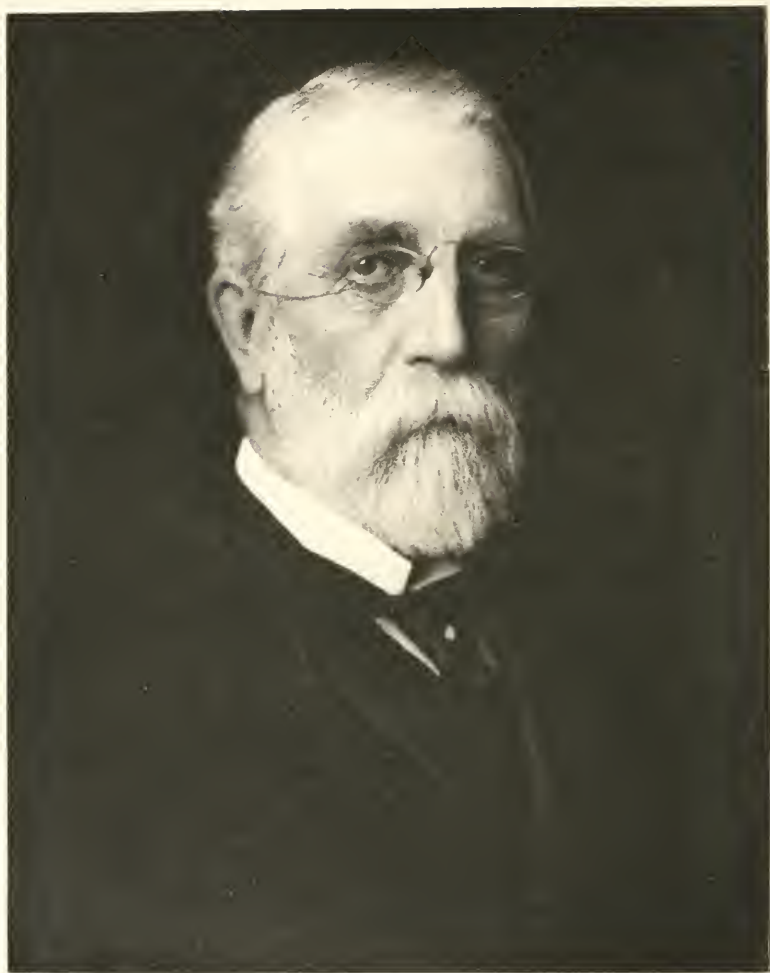
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Homer Eaton

HOMER EATON

BORN, NOVEMBER 16, 1834

DIED, FEBRUARY 9, 1913

THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
NEW YORK—CINCINNATI

HOMER EATON

BY EZRA SQUIER TIPPLE, D.D.

“**F**EAR death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face.”

Handel, the musician, often expressed the wish that he might breathe his last on Good Friday, in the hope, as he said, of meeting his dear Lord and Saviour on the day of his resurrection. The sainted Leighton used frequently to say that if he were to choose a place in which to die it would be in an inn, since he was as a pilgrim making a journey. Some men, however, have little to say of death. Not that they fear it, but life is sweet to them, and work under shining skies a joy. Homer Eaton did not often speak of death; he seldom talked about heaven. Why should he? He was living an abundant life; his companion of more than a half century sat with him before the open fire when the day's work was done, the Church honored and trusted him, he was happy and content. It did not seem to him as if he could die—except that now and again in the last months he would make some veiled reference to the approach of the Messenger, as a shy maiden would hint at the coming of her lover. Even at the very last, like Emanuel Deutsch, who when dying wrote, “Yet all this while my brain is teeming with work—work that seems cut out as by special primeval arrangement and for me only,” Homer Eaton was planning, planning, planning, impatiently eager to

carry forward the large enterprises the Church had committed to his hands, and believing that he still had almost limitless resources of vitality and vigor for his important task. But it was otherwise ordained, and suddenly, at the end of a beautiful Sabbath day, February 9, 1913, while his wife, in their home in Madison, N. J., was reading to him of the activities of the Church to which he had given the tireless devotion of his great heart, he ceased to labor and to live. It was the close of a long and notable career, and the invisible choir of angels must have sung at vesper song that Lord's day in the Heavenly City,

“Servant of God, well done!
Thy glorious warfare's past;
The battle's fought, the race is won,
And thou art crowned at last.”

What a full life his was, for he was born November 16, 1834, at Enosburg, Vt., and what a fruitful life! Gladstone once said that there is in this world one unfailing test of greatness, namely, that a man shall be felt to be greater than his works. Homer Eaton was larger than anything and everything he did. And that is saying much, for during his life's long day he carried many heavy burdens, worked at not a few large tasks, overcame various and towering obstacles, toiled early and late, and at the end of the day, with heart unafraid and eyes unashamed, met the Lord of the Kingdom with a glad shout, “Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold. I have gained beside them five talents more.” Nevertheless, he himself was greater than his achievements. It was

his personality even more than the labors of his hands which stirred our admiration and won our approbation. Yet it must not be forgotten that he accomplished much, and never more than in his latest years. Lowell, speaking of Emerson as a lecturer, said, "For us the whole life of the man is distilled in the clear drop of every sentence, and behind each word we divine the force of a noble character, the weight of a large capital of thinking and being." This man also put himself, his ancestry, his wide experience, his long years of devoted service into what he said and did, and his words were words of prudence and wisdom, and his deeds were worthy deeds because he was what he was. How unwillingly, however, would he have conceded this. Like Moses, he wist not that his face did shine. Genuinely humble, without ostentation, simple, without self-assertiveness, he never gave any hint that he reckoned himself a great man. Yet he was.

His natural endowments were imperial. Not only was he well born, but he was gifted, like Saul, beyond his brethren. Nature was more than generous with him. Tall, erect, even kingly in appearance, with a superb head, well placed on ample shoulders, a gracious manner, and a stately carriage, wherever he went men instinctively turned to look at him and to inquire concerning him. Born in Vermont, among those northern hills, of American stock, he was the best type of an American, like Abraham Lincoln, of rugged honesty, granitic strength of will, and lofty moral purposes. The mountains amid which he spent his boyhood played their part in the making of

this sturdy man, for not only are mountains, as Ruskin thought, "the beginning and end of all natural scenery," but they lend their mighty influence to the fashioning of the lives of those who dwell upon their heights or walk in their shadows. The historian Parkman, who lived out of doors, and knew as few men the secrets of nature, declared, "There is a spirit of energy in mountains, and they impart it to all who approach them." Homer Eaton felt that mystic touch of the everlasting hills upon his heart in his youth, and throughout his long life he showed at all times evidences of this heritage of strength and power. Not only did he look the man he was, but he was every whit the man he looked. A workingman said to the venerable Dr. Bacon, of New Haven, when they met one day in the closing years of that good man's noble life, "We are glad to see you, sir, walking in our part of the town." It was with much the same feeling of pleasurable gratification and even reverence that you saw Homer Eaton approach. His presence made any group a more consequential one; his companionship made any hour of the day brighter, and any piece of the road easier to travel. Where he walked was sunshine, his smile brought cheer, his handclasp gave inspiration, from his person radiated strength.

He early displayed marked gifts of leadership. He entered upon the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1857, when he joined the Troy Conference on trial, with which his father, after having supplied as local preacher numerous pastoral charges within reach of his farm for many years, had united seven years previously.

The preparation which Homer Eaton had for his high calling had been obtained, like the Wesleys', in the home circle, and later at an academy at Bakersfield, Vt., and still later at the Biblical Institute, Concord, N. H. It may not have been as ample perhaps as this modern age demands, but it was sufficient to give him a love of books, which never forsook him, and to discipline his will to habits of study and work, which never failed him down to life's latest day, so that like Green, the historian, he died learning. Entering upon the work to which he had been summoned by the Church, he began at once to take high rank as an effective preacher of the gospel. After the manner of Methodist itinerant preachers, he preached in many places, and in every place acceptably. In the pulpit his personal appearance again was a contributing factor to his success. When he rose to speak, the people waited in expectation, and he did not disappoint them. His voice was rich and strong, and with a fine appreciation of its value he made it serve his purpose in a remarkable way. He really loved to preach, and though in later years he did not often exercise his preaching gifts, he ever found joy and satisfaction in heralding the "good news." More than once did he tell me of pulpit experiences which were precious memories to him, wells of living waters from which he often drank when at the bidding of the Church he had undertaken another form of Christian service. When we think of Homer Eaton as a great Publishing Agent, we must not forget that he was first a great preacher and that in every place where he was stationed he

exercised leadership through preaching to a conspicuous degree.

Let it not be thought to his discredit when I say that he was a denominationalist. In an age when there is much talk of Christian unity, and the differences which separated men in other years are minimized and not infrequently ridiculed, and when the beliefs of men even are made the jests of scorners, he was proud of his denominational heritage, and sturdily refused to be swerved from rigid adherence to the historic principles of Methodism. His love for the Methodist Episcopal Church was pronounced. For him the fire always burned brightest on that hearth. His knowledge of its history and traditions was both comprehensive and accurate. His devotion to its ideals was steadfast and complete. When he was born, Francis Asbury had been dead not twenty years, William McKendree was still living, as was the brilliant Henry B. Bascom, and as were many others of the Fathers. He knew them and their works at close range. Stories of the hardships and heroisms of Methodist itinerant preachers were told him at his mother's knee, and he caught thus the spirit of the Methodist movement, and neither the passing years nor the changing age ever robbed him of it. He was ever a denominationalist, yet without bigotry, a sectary, but free from intolerance. His pride in his denomination, in its achievements at home and abroad, in the development of the publishing interests of the Church, in every advance in education, or philanthropy, or evangelism, was a marked characteristic. How refreshing was his denominational

self-satisfaction, how inspiring his denominational eagerness!

And the Church appreciated his abilities and commanded his services to an unusual degree. He served two terms as Presiding Elder, and was elected by his Conference a delegate to the General Conference ten times, continuously from 1872 to 1912, except in 1876, when on his own initiative another was chosen in his stead. He was twice a delegate to the Ecumenical Conference, and a fraternal delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada. From 1880 to 1888 he was an active and useful member of the Book Committee, and during these years were begun some of his warmest friendships. Homer Eaton had an unusual gift for friendships. Though he was always busy, he seemed to find more time than most men to work in the gardens where friendships grow. Never a gossip, never garrulous, without a hint of softness, seldom giving expression to his feelings, and less frequently even bestowing "confidences," he bound men, young and old, to him in a remarkable manner. They loved him, and were not ashamed to confess it. And he gave like for like. Who that looked upon him could think of his being niggardly in any respect? His devotion to his friends was so generous and so persistent as sometimes to arouse criticism, and to imperil his position, yet would not he forswear his allegiance. It was as when a French monarch, solicited to consent to a dishonorable treaty, cried out, "The blood of Charlemagne is in my veins, and who dares propose this thing to me?" It was inconceivable to this lordly-souled Vermonter, this

chivalrous Greatheart, that one should betray a friend. He was no Judas. His lips never kissed away the life of one with whom he had eaten bread. Life's friendships were sacred with him.

And not alone of those in the circle of his intimate friends was he considerate, but his attitude toward all men was frank and generous. During years of intimacy with him, for which I am thankful to God, I never heard him speak ill of any man. Even when his integrity was questioned, when his motives were misconstrued, and his silence was misinterpreted, even then he smiled and was gracious. There was no paltriness in his devotion, no timidity, no cowardice; never was it a matter of calculation, never were consequences let to determine the quality or duration of it.

His was the heart of a great lover, and this determined not only his relations to people, but his outlook upon the world. It was with a cheerful eye that he looked from his window into the fields or upon the avenue. He loved the song of the thrush, the white birches, the hum of bees, the flight of doves, the fragrance of an old-fashioned garden, a country road. It was God's world, and he was at home in it. He was interested in the passing crowds in New York, in Peking, in every place. They were God's people. The woes and sins of the world oppressed him, but not to the extent of making it uncomfortable to be near him. His sense of humor kept him from sourness; his fine optimism from despair. His interest in missions was not official, but personal; not perfunctory, but spontaneous and perennial. It was not because he

was Treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions that he was concerned for the peoples beyond the seas, but because he held a trusteeship in the kingdom of heaven upon earth. God was in his world, and at work, and toward a divine purpose, and he was working with him, and O! the exhilaration of it!

“How good is man’s life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!”

Dr. Eaton’s devotion to the cause of Missions was thoroughly scriptural. He believed that God’s program included the “discipling all nations,” and he rejoiced to be a co-worker in the carrying out of the divine purpose. He was made treasurer of the Missionary Society in 1896, and thereafter until his death he administered the duties of that important office with honor and to the advantage of the work. On one occasion he went as the representative of the Board to the far East, and everywhere was welcomed, not only as a friend, but for the wealth of his wide experience and for the benefit of his shrewd counsel. In Shanghai he gave himself to the particular work for which he was there, the establishing of a joint Mission Publishing House as decided upon by the Methodist Episcopal Church South, the Canadian Methodist Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, and so successful was he that the results more than justified his designation for this delicate and important task. In 1910 he was a delegate to the great Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, and as everywhere was a commanding figure.

On this occasion, by direction of the Board, he visited our missions in Europe, visiting the Annual Conferences and mission stations, examining mission properties, and giving expert opinion concerning values, etc., and acquiring knowledge for himself and for the Board which proved of much value. The confidence of the Board in his judgment and skill was complete.

It was in 1889 that he became one of the Agents of the Methodist Book Concern. The death of John M. Phillips had left a vacancy in the New York House, and to fill this important position Homer Eaton was elected by the Book Committee at its meeting in New York in February of that year, an office which he held with ever-increasing distinction for twenty-four years, a longer period than any other Agent in the history of the publishing interests of the Church. He was in the prime of life when he came to his great task and his greatest opportunity, bringing with him a disciplined mind, a superb physique, a heart enriched by varied experiences, and a character above reproach. In architecture it is said that the arch never sleeps, but faithfully holds its burden by day and by night. In like manner and with equal fidelity Homer Eaton served the Church as one of its Publishing Agents. He was a tireless and unceasing servant. He had no other ambition, he had no thought for anything else. The Book Concern became his supreme passion. In it he lived and moved and had his existence. Who that has known him these years can ever forget how completely he was swallowed up of his work? It filled his whole thought, it fired his imagination, it drove him hither and yon in the last

months when his steps began to falter. His was a whole-hearted service.

Dr. Eaton had certain business instincts, all-important in the management and development of such a large enterprise as our Book Concern has grown to be, and which contributed in no small measure to the success which attended his labors and the labors of those associated with him. He was keen, sagacious, with power of initiative; looked at things in a large way, saw possibilities of growth, was courageous and enterprising yet cautious; knew values and men, was blessed with adaptability and tact, and was unfailingly just. I am not saying that this man was a business genius. "Men give me credit for genius," said Alexander Hamilton; "all the genius I have lies in just this: when I have a subject in hand I study it profoundly day and night. It is part of me; I explore it in all its bearings; my mind becomes pervaded with it. Then the effort which I make people are pleased to call the fruit of genius; it is the fruit of labor and thought." It was this kind of genius which was Homer Eaton's most conspicuous contribution to the Book Concern.

Upon his election he determined to master the vast and complex business which he had been asked by the Church to carry forward, and by patient inquiry, by persistent observation, by diligent study of the methods of other publishing houses, by personal restrictions upon his time and energy, in order that he might do this one thing, he came to have an unsurpassed knowledge of our publishing interests, and while the growth of the business during the last quar-

ter of a century has been unprecedented, and while he would have been the last to claim that this increase was due to his energy and acumen, nevertheless his was ever a clear brain and a strong arm, and to him must be given a full measure of praise. This is not the place to recite the annals of the Book Concern for the last quarter of a century—the most momentous period in its entire history—to tell of the controversies concerning consolidation, and the debates as to radical changes of policy, the enlarging interest of the members of the Book Committee in all the manifold problems of the publication and circulation of books and periodicals, and the increasing and signally effective coöperation of the Local Committees at Cincinnati and New York, and how the discussion carried on by individuals and by the Church press, and by commissions and General Conferences, finally eventuated in the unification of all the publishing interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church under the corporate title The Methodist Book Concern—this is not a record of history which I am writing, but a tribute to the memory of a man who helped in a large and worthy way to make the history of the past twenty-four years, than whom no man was more keenly concerned in the questions of such transcendent importance, and who in his quiet, shrewd way contributed his judgment, wisdom, experience, and diplomacy to bring about the final outcome. It will ever be the distinction of Homer Eaton that, the General Conference of 1912 having determined that there shall be elected quadrennially four Publishing Agents, and that the Book Committee

“shall designate one of these Publishing Agents as the General Agent,” when the Book Committee met in Minneapolis for organization he was chosen as the *first* General Agent, a worthy crown of a distinguished career.

He entered upon his new and important duties with a deep appreciation of the grave responsibilities which this merited but weighty distinction laid upon him. It was a new path along which he must go. There were no precedents. The legislation of the General Conference, though specific, would perhaps require now and again interpretation; his new duties would need to be defined more clearly, and for the first time in all my years of acquaintance with him I thought I detected the faintest shadow of timidity or hesitation, but he kept stoutly to his task, saying over and over with splendid courage and fine confidence, “I will not disappoint the Church. I have been asked to do this work, and I will do it or die.” How characteristic this was! And he was faithful to his vow. Death found him at his task doing the work the Church had given him to do, and doing it well, and the Church will not cease to cherish his memory, or to bless God that His servant was strong and steadfast through many fruitful years; that his faith failed not at any time, and that the labors of his hands were more and more abundant with the multiplying years; that he met Death with hands unstained and heart unsullied, and that when he went away he left as his imperishable monument, a monument as expressive of his personality and genius as Saint Paul’s Cathedral, London, is of the constructive ability of Sir Christopher Wren, *a greater Book Concern*.

There is an old Roman epitaph on the tomb of two young children: "From themselves they took away pain; to their friends they left it." When our friend departed he left sitting in the shadow of the great sorrow many whose eyes are still dim with tears, and who will long feel the sharp, grievous pain of their loss, and one in particular, who had been his dearest companion and wisest counselor for more than a half century, whose smile was more radiant, whose graciousness was more perfect, whose hand was more soothing, and whose comradeship was more complete than all others, and to whom in the isolation of her grief and her precious memories our hearts turn with affectionate sympathy, and for whom we covet the comfort and strength of God's grace.

*Minute read and adopted at the first session of the
Annual Meeting of the Book Committee of the
Methodist Episcopal Church, held at Cincinnati,
Ohio, Wednesday, April 16, 1913.*

FUNERAL SERVICES

THE FUNERAL SERVICES

At the Residence in Madison

AT the hour appointed—2:30 in the afternoon of Wednesday, February 12—all available space in the home was occupied. In addition to the near neighbors, including those from Drew Theological Seminary, directly across the way, there were many fellow townsmen, members of the several churches and a number of friends from a distance, many of whom are prominent in Methodist circles. The room where the casket rested was filled with beautiful flowers.

Dr. Eaton's pastor, the Rev. George Mooney, opened the service, and at the close pronounced the benediction. The publishing agents of the Methodist Book Concern at New York and Cincinnati, Drs. George P. Mains and Henry C. Jennings, offered prayer. Dr. John L. Fort, of Troy Conference, and Dr. George P. Eckman, editor of *The Christian Advocate*, read the passages of Scripture.

"How firm a foundation" was the hymn which the assembled company sang, all standing. Then followed three eulogies, touching with tender reverence upon the private life and the public ministrations of their departed friend and coworker, these delivered by Drs. Robert W. Rogers and Henry A. Buttz, Dr. Eaton's near neighbors for many years, and Bishop Luther B. Wilson.

Dr. Rogers said, in part:

"There has gone out from among us a man, the

very figure and sight of whom will long last in the inner eye of the minds of those who have been watching him during these years. What a handsome man he was—towering above his fellows, dignified in every movement! And that body of his—crowned by that noble head, with a profile that would have honored any bronze medal anywhere! What a face it was—lighted with a smile, or solemn and earnest when he was performing some great deed! And what a voice he had! I loved to hear him when he preached, and can still hear the thunders of his voice.

“It is a loss, and a big one, and nothing will make it seem light. We who lived so near him here, and not only admired him, but earnestly loved him, will miss him. The only and best hope for all of us is that some day we shall see him again with the old smile on his face, having gone home to his God, whom he loved and whom he honestly served on earth with uprightness and righteousness.”

Dr. Buttz, who was deeply affected by his personal loss, spoke of Dr. Eaton’s great power of leadership, his tender sympathy, and then of his relation to the community in which he lived:

“He entered into the life of the church of the community. He was a part of us. His work was in New York, but his home and his thought were here. He has been the President of the Board of Trustees of this church here. Every interest of the church and of the community was dear to his heart, and now that he has passed away one feeling comes over all the people, one feeling of sadness that the dear friend has gone. People have said to me, not ‘What a great

loss *you* have had,' but 'What a great loss *we* have had.' He has been bound to our community and to the Seminary and to the church and our people. His home was directly opposite the Seminary, and we always knew that there was a friendly eye looking at it, and a friendly heart, and a friendly life. I have known him so well, and I know the deep sympathies of his heart, and I know the indebtedness that Drew has to him—for fifteen years a member of its Board of Trustees, and a member of the Executive Committee, ever giving his time and his thought without measure."

Bishop Wilson's brief address was largely concerned with the manliness of the deceased. After speaking of his large and useful contribution to the work of the Church, he concluded:

"I think it is a great way to go out of life as he went. Just a touch of weakness and a lying down a while. Just a moment's tarrying in the presence of her who was all the world to him. Just a listening to the voice that was of all the voices of the earth most musical to him. Just a word to show that the mind and heart were still awake and listening for the growth of the Kingdom—and then in a moment the closing of the eyes and the closing of the ears, shutting out the beauty and the music. And then the awakening again, after that moment of the closed eyes and the stopped ear, the rising again to hear those diviner symphonies and to look upon those greater and eternal glories. I would to God that the spirit of this man might come upon all the Church—a record for the inspiration of those who knew him. We will

count it as one of the glories of that other land that he is there, in the presence of the King and of that great fellowship to which the Church on earth is adding one and another of the saintly lives. The glory of that land will be the greater because you and I believe we shall, through the simplicity of faith, through the abundance of God's grace, be privileged to meet that knightly soul again."

The closing prayer, invoking from the Eternal Father blessings and comfort for the company of friends, and especially the bereaved wife, who had lived more than fifty years beside the one whom they had assembled to honor, was offered by Dr. Ezra S. Tipple, President of Drew Theological Seminary.

At the Book Room for the Last Time

Dr. Eaton had said that he would surely be at the Book Concern this week, and the promise was sadly fulfilled when his body was brought to New York and placed in the chapel on the third floor of The Methodist Book Concern on Wednesday evening, where the following trusted employees of the house watched by it lovingly through the night: William Graham, Albert Smyth, Julius Heims, Charles W. Lewis, E. E. Clawson, Herman C. Voss, Richard Wegener, and J. R. Hewlett.

The Book Concern flag was at half-mast on Thursday and a black-bordered sign at the entrance announced the cessation of business until one o'clock. At ten the chapel was filled with representatives of the workers in the building and of the many boards with which Dr. Eaton had been connected.

The platform was filled with official persons. The massive rosewood casket was banked in with flowers, conspicuous among them a map of the mission lands done in white and red carnations. The bearers were six men from the manufacturing, sales, and accounting departments: William H. Warner, Albert Smyth, John R. Hewlett, William Wilson, Herman C. Voss, and Jacob A. Wirth.

Dr. E. S. Tipple, who was in charge, opened the simple service with the Scripture sentences. Dr. H. C. Jennings followed with prayer, after which all sang "My faith looks up to Thee." Dr. A. B. Leonard read the Old Testament lesson and Dr. H. A. Buttz read the New Testament lesson. President Tipple read some of the many messages which had been received, including those from the Kansas City Depository, Bishop Walden, Dr. Robert T. Miller, the resolutions of the New York Preachers' Meeting and of the Drew Seminary officers and students. Bishop Wilson, who made the first address, emphasized the symmetry and beauty of Dr. Eaton's character, and from the lesson of this life exhorted his hearers to give the Church and the service of Christ the first place in their lives.

Dr. F. M. North, representing the Board of Foreign Missions, spoke of the name of Homer Eaton, a "good" name on business paper in every banking house on the globe. He praised him as treasurer of the Missionary Society, who sometimes intrusted "his duties" to subordinates, but who never forgot "his duty" to his office. This treasurer was no mere custodian of funds; he was a personality of broad horizon,

who was interested in his accounts because he believed in what the money would accomplish.

Dr. George P. Mains prefaced his remarks by reading a resolution which had been adopted on Tuesday at a mass meeting of the employees in manufacturing, editorial, and missionary departments of the building. Speaking of his own intimate relations with Dr. Eaton for seventeen years, he said that though they had not always been able to see all questions as one, they had never had a rupture or a serious difference. Dr. Eaton was for fifty-six years in the service of the Church, a service for which he was fitted by gifts, purpose, and consecration. Despite a large fund of native humor, he could be on occasion grave enough, and was never lacking in balance, sanity, and statesmanlike grasp. Such was his capacity for bringing men into line with his purposes that he would have been a power in the Senate had he entered the political field. His high talent for friendship was characterized by intense loyalty, like that of U. S. Grant for his friends. In conclusion Dr. Mains alluded to Dr. Eaton's loving wife and home and sketched with pathetic simplicity the circumstances of his final hours.

Bishop Joseph F. Berry offered a brief prayer, after which the benediction was pronounced by Dr. John L. Fort.

The remains were taken from the Book Concern building to the Grand Central Station, and thence to Albany.

Some thirty of the Methodist ministers of Albany and Troy met the funeral party at the Union railroad

depot at Albany, and, with the superintendents of the Albány, Troy, Burlington, and Saratoga Districts, accompanied them to the Albany Rural Cemetery. There the casket was opened and the preachers looked for the last time here on the face of their translated brother. They sang together "The sweet bye and bye," Dr. John H. Coleman offered prayer, and the benediction was pronounced by Dr. E. P. Stevens.

—*From The Christian Advocate, February 19, 1913.*

THE Troy Conference, of which Dr. Eaton was an honored member for fifty-six years, the first day of its annual session, April 9, 1913, held a memorial service in the Chapel of the Albany Rural Cemetery, at which addresses were made by Bishop Luther B. Wilson and Rev. W. H. Hughes, D.D., and the final interment of the body of Dr. Eaton took place.

ADDRESSES AT THE FUNERAL
SERVICES

IN MEMORIAM: REV. HOMER EATON,
D.D., LL.D.

BY HENRY ANSON BUTTZ, D.D., LL.D.

WE are here to-day under the shadow of a great sorrow. A devoted husband, a gentle spirit, a faithful friend, a prince and a great man has fallen in our Israel. The sudden calling away of Dr. Eaton has caused universal sorrow throughout the Church; wherever the news has gone they have felt the greatness of the loss.

Dr. Eaton was great in the breadth of his service to the Church. To few men has been given such an extended and so broad an experience. He was a graduate of Concord Biblical Institute; he entered the ministry in the Troy Conference, of which he remained a beloved and honored member until his death. He occupied a high position as a preacher and pastor and was for many years Presiding Elder. From this he was called to the great publishing interests of the Church, in which he won marked success, of which others will speak. In every position to which he was called he was eminently successful. Fidelity to duty was everywhere apparent in his life and labor. Dr. Eaton was a leader of men. Almost unconsciously people yielded to his views and were guided by him. He was wise in council and carefully considered every subject which was brought before him in all its bearings. He was cool in judgment, reaching his conclusion by the clear processes of thought and not by

impulse. His judgment could be trusted. He was decisive in action. When he had reached conclusions he followed them to their logical results.

Dr. Eaton was great in the depth of his sympathies. What a tender heart he had! How he welcomed those who sought his counsel and help! Who can think of Homer Eaton except as a friend and brother? I have been permitted to know him intimately for nearly a quarter of a century as a dear friend. When he came to Madison he built his house just opposite the Seminary, where he could look upon us and we could look upon him, and we knew that he was ever looking upon us with a kindly eye. He became a Trustee of Drew Theological Seminary and a member of the Executive Committee, and was ever ready with his counsel and his help. I may not speak at length of his services to Drew Theological Seminary. They have been very great, and the Seminary owes him a debt of gratitude for his long and faithful service, which did not cease until his death. Dr. Eaton was sympathetic with this community, in which he was so long a resident. When he came he identified himself with the interests of the Church and was ever faithful to it. He was the President of the Board of Trustees, and all the people of the Church felt that they had in him a friend and brother who sympathized with the church in its movements for the salvation of men. Our community, as well as the Church, mourns his loss and will greatly miss him.

He was firm in the faith of the Gospel. The hymn which would well apply to him is that which begins with the words, "How firm a foundation, ye

saints of the Lord.” Of the beautiful home relations I may not speak. The sacredness is beyond any words of mine. His devotion to her who has been his helpmate and support through the long years of their married life, and her faith and devotion to him, are a part of the beautiful home life which belongs to the true Christian family in its highest and noblest form. The sympathy of the Church goes out to her in this sad hour. I may not speak of the personal sadness which comes to me in the death of my neighbor and friend. On Sunday evening I had been reading a sermon of Saint Chrysostom on the text, “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not as others who have no hope,” when the news came of his death. It was a sad blow to my heart, but the text was full of hope. We sorrow, but with the hope full of immortality. There is light beyond in this time of our sorrow. There is light for the Church, light for the stricken home. There is the unfading light of the eternal city into which he has gone.

A MAN AMONG MEN

BY PROFESSOR ROBERT W. ROGERS, PH.D., LL.D.

IT is not for me, but for some of those who stand highest in the Church, in her work and her councils, to have the sad and solemn honor of burying this distinguished son of the Church. But I should do scant credit to my heart, and very little to my mind, if I did not venture to speak a word of warm and enthusiastic praise of him, and make no apology

for the doing of it. There has gone out from among us a man, the very figure and sight of whom will never grow less in the inner eye of the mind of those who have been watching him during these years. What a handsome man he was! towering above his fellows, of noble stature, dignified in every movement of his body, needing not to imitate and cultivate dignity as lesser men might have done! And that body of his crowned by that noble head, with a profile that would have honored any bronze medal anywhere! And what a face it was, lighted with a smile, or solemn and earnest when he was performing some great thing! And what a voice he had! I used often to compare it to a great organ of which he drew out one stop after another, and he would laugh good-naturedly at the simile. I loved to hear him when he preached, and can still feel the vibrant music of his voice.

He was a man among men. Many a time have I watched him at our receptions here and at other places. It was men that crowded around him and were dominated by him. Some men have the grace and the elegance and a certain refinement of manner that enables them to appeal to women. But here was a man whom men willingly and gladly went after, and were eager to talk to, eager to be influenced by, a man among men!

I think when the record is all added up by the people who know it all from the beginning to the end, it will seem more and more sure that he was a great man in his ability. When he undertook a thing, he had a way of carrying it through that set the work that seemed heavy to other men lightly on its way.

He showed that in the early days in the work that he did in the churches in which he was pastor. He told me about the way he had once administered a delicate little situation when he was a presiding elder, and I have often used it as a little caution and example to the students.

But, of course, the crown of his life was the great publishing work, in which he took such splendid pride, in the service of the Church. It will be made known by those who have had better opportunity, all that he did in those wonderful years. Of course, he was very happy in his associations with the men there and in the men who represented the other side of that enterprise, and it is their pride to-day to acknowledge that he had an easy strength and leadership which they were glad to see applied to the work of the Church of God.

It is a loss, and a big one, and nothing will make it seem light. We who lived so near him here, and not only admired him, but honestly loved him, will miss him. I cannot but wish that it might have been different, that he might have been able to stop the work and rest in the evening of life. It would have been a very goodly sight to see him seated at rest on his front porch, set free from his labors. But it was not so to be. The only and best hope for all of us is that some day we shall see him again with the old smile on his face, having gone home to his God whom he loved and whom he honestly served with a life of uprightness. And if we can see him again, it will be worth while. This we have to look forward to with thanks to God for his life and thanks that it was our

high privilege to have walked with him and to have touched his hand and felt his smile and realized the tenderness of his heart. May God give us peace in our time of departure, even as he gave him.

HOMER EATON

BY FRANK MASON NORTH, D.D.

Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions

FOR this brief characterization one might well covet Homer Eaton's own striking power of sententious expression. How vivid he is to us—in his dignity, his humor, his wisdom, his gentleness, his strength!

His was a memorable name. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." It is no wresting of Scripture, no play upon words, to say that the name of Homer Eaton was good. It has backed commercial paper to the outer limits of a great credit, and has been for a score of years a familiar sign of value in the leading banking institutions of this metropolis. It has passed under the eye of traders and financiers in every quarter of the globe, among peoples of every hue and language, and it has never been challenged. The splendid credit of a great Society was under it, but to-day we cannot forget that to his carefulness and foresight and unfretted constancy that credit, in no small degree, was due.

Dr. Eaton came into the office of treasurer of the Missionary Society in 1896. The intervening years have been marked by a wide expansion of the Society's enterprise and by a corresponding increase of its

financial obligations. In quick succession have come the occasions for the display of those two fatal qualities of bad financiering—a rigid conservatism that locks and bolts the door which should have been pushed ajar, and an unreckoning rashness which rushes through doorways which never should have been opened at all. It was not in Homer Eaton to fail at either point. He was at once flexible and firm. By temperament he ever sought that larger justice which it is the misfortune of precedent and convention sometimes to betray. His was a strict sense of his own prerogative, founded upon a clear appreciation of his own responsibility. To others whom he trusted he quite willingly delegated some of the *duties* of his office, but he never gave up to another the *duty* of his office. It was his fortune, perhaps it were better to say his faculty, to have near him trained men who believed in him, loved him, revered him; in their hands his honor has been ever safe and his confidence has never been betrayed.

It was with a keen and pardonable pride that he said, when negotiating a loan, in the lean, dry days of last summer, "The treasury handles each year a million and a half of dollars, but in its history of nearly a century it has never lost a cent."

But to this Board of Foreign Missions Homer Eaton has given not only a name honored and negotiable on 'Change; he has given a personality. He was no mere guardian of funds. He watched the money because of what he was convinced the money could do. Few men during the years of his membership in the Board have been wiser when wisdom

counted, firmer when vacillation meant disaster, prompter when hasty and ill-advised decisions were impending, or more tender when kindness should be pushed beyond mere sympathy that it might become essential justice. To his natural equipment for right thinking was added the experience of observation in some of the mission fields. His intimate relation with the broader movements of the Church for more than a generation saved him from the horizons of littleness. He was long contemporary with the strong men under whose vigorous faith the later policies of the Church and her great agencies have been shaped. Many of these men he outlived, but their influence persisted in his own thinking. His catholic spirit and genial humor won for him the fellowship of many younger men, with whom he was ever at home—whose viewpoints he was quick to see, even when their enthusiasms left him unshaken and unconvinced. Such a man, so trained, so experienced, so hospitable, would be inevitably an influential counselor where world policies are being framed and a pillar in whatever temple of God the Master-builder might choose to place him.

In this room, in this presence, it is impossible not to recall those men whose voices we have so often heard, in protest against petty measures, or perilous tendencies, or in advocacy of the larger programs of the Kingdom. In our remembrance they stand for great outlooks upon the world, for intense zeal, for achievement in the name of Christ, for that spirit of personal sacrifice which is the very essence of the missionary vocation, for the faith before which a

thousand times mountains have been leveled or tunneled or cast into the depths of the sea. As we recall them, one and another and another—we who in the providence of God are entering into their labors—well may we pray that for the newer, the broader, the more imperious tasks which to-day are crowding toward us, there may come upon us a double portion of their spirit.

And among these noblemen of the Kingdom, missing his quiet step in hallways and office, reluctant to let go the expectation of greeting him somewhere on the morrow, sorrowing that we shall no more hear his rich, wise voice in our councils, nor shall read again the familiar signature freshly written by his fine, firm hand—we place high and in the front rank our loved and revered comrade in this service of the world and of its Lord—Homer Eaton. And well assured are we that his potent name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

A KNIGHTLY SOUL

BY BISHOP LUTHER B. WILSON, D.D., LL.D.

IT is not necessary that any other word shall be spoken. I wish simply to pay a tribute to this man of God. He seemed always a man to me. The humanness of his character appealed to me. It is fair to say that there was as little pretense in Dr. Eaton as in any man whom we have known. There was no veneering of intellectual or spiritual trait with him. I think that he was just exactly what he seemed to be. And because I felt that he was that, he won my honor, and,

as Dr. Rogers has said, my love. The finest contribution that any man can make to the world is the contribution of his character. Dr. Eaton by his character was an inspiration to righteousness and conscientiousness and all that belongs to the high moralities of life. If he had simply through the circumstances of the ministry and his official responsibility, worked out that character of his until his life was finished, that would have been a contribution which would have laid the Church and the State in indebtedness to him always. But in the working out of that character he accomplished much, for there was no interest of the Church or of the State that did not appeal to him. The nation to-day is celebrating the birth of Abraham Lincoln because of his friendship for the lowly and the oppressed. We may recognize Dr. Eaton as a friend of the plain, the common man, a friend to the man who needed a friend, and *every* man who needed a friend. There was no interest of the Church which did not appeal to him. For how many years was he the Treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions, and for how long a time was he identified with that great interest that bound his heart! He could not be interested in affairs but that he declared his friendship in the most unequivocal way. He was one of the counselors of the Church, many times a member of the governing body of the great Church to which he gave his life and pledged his devotion. But whether in one aspect or in another, whether in the office where we loved to see him, or whether there in the General Conference, wherever it was that he spoke, his ecclesiastical diplomacy, I think, was like that of Dr. John Hay, recog-

nized for its straightforwardness always and for its lack of that method that is sometimes more effective than admirable.

So he has measured out life's day. It has been my privilege to come into close fellowship with him in the last weeks and months, and I am glad to feel to-day from the assurance of the very last words that he spoke to me how the friendships of life still gripped him. It is a great way to go out of life as he went. Just a touch of weakness and a lying down a while; just a moment's tarrying in the presence of her who was all the world to him; just a listening to the voice that was of all the voices of the earth most musical to him; just a word to show that the mind and heart were still awake and listening for news of the growth of the kingdom; and then in a moment the closing of the eyes and the closing of the ears, shutting out the beauty and the music, and then—I think all of us must agree—the awakening again after that moment of the closed eyes and the stopped ear, the rising again to hear those diviner symphonies and to look upon those greater and eternal glories.

To-day he is in the presence of the King and of that great fellowship to which the Church on earth is adding one and another of the saintly lives. The glory of that land will be the greater because you and I, please God, shall through the simplicity of faith, and the abundance of God's great grace, be privileged to meet that knightly soul again.

TELEGRAMS

Miami, Florida, February 10, 1913.

EZRA B. TUTTLE, Chairman,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

NECESSARY absence here makes it impossible for me to reach Madison for Dr. Eaton's funeral. With your colleagues of New York Local Committee please represent Book Committee.

The whole Church will miss Homer Eaton. How much we owe to his long service! A secular business would have paid many thousands annually for what he accomplished. Many a veteran's home has been made comfortable because he was faithful. He helped give us a great literature and has indelibly stamped his impress upon his loved Book Concern.

In devotion, candor, and fidelity he was an example to all in official life! Enriching the treasury of his Church through his business sagacity and persistent labors, he lived simply and gave himself without reserve to the cause he served. How we all loved him—stalwart that he was in body, mind, and soul. A very man has left us!

JOHN A. PATTEN.

REV. DR. E. S. TIPPLe,

Madison, New Jersey.

HENCEFORTH, in the recorded life and activities of our Church, there will be a large and distinctly vacant place, where for half a century heretofore the name of Homer Eaton has appeared as pastor, publishing agent, missionary treasurer, committeeman, fraternal delegate, and in other positions of high official responsibility and dignity to which he has been repeatedly appointed and in which he has rendered valuable and distinguished service. Few of the Church but knew him, fewer but honored him, and fewer still but will hold in faithful and grateful remembrance so honorable a service and name. Sturdy, steadfast, and serene even in sessions of stormy debate, "with malice toward none, with charity for all," he held his course true, conscious of no obligation superior to that he owed to conscience and duty.

ROBERT T. MILLER.

RESOLUTIONS

LOCAL COMMITTEE AT CINCINNATI

WITH peculiar sorrow and distress the Local Committee at Cincinnati records the death of Rev. Homer Eaton, D.D., the General Agent of The Methodist Book Concern, but with equal pride and gratitude also records this tribute in memory of the conspicuous service he has rendered the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the chief councils of which he had taken a large and helpful part as Pastor, Presiding Elder, Annual and General Conference Official, Commissioner, Fraternal Delegate—and finally and more especially as a Member and as Chairman of the Book Committee, from which he was chosen as Publishing Agent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in this served continuously from 1889 till his death on February 9, 1913.

In these several positions of high duty and honor he distinguished himself by faithful service, of which the Church showed its appreciation by repeatedly re-electing him to many of these positions—till finally he has passed away—literally dying in the harness.

He has left not only an enviable record of great usefulness, but of great success, and has left also a memory of high personal and moral dignity in official life—which all must acknowledge to be the noblest and most honorable heritage man can leave to his successors in the mission of life.

We join in the general sorrow of the Church at his departure, and most sincerely tender our sympa-

thies to the circle of immediate friends, and especially do our hearts share in the great sorrow which has so suddenly come upon the wife whom he leaves in loneliness and bereavement. May God comfort her as no earthly friend can do, and supply her abundantly with the all-sufficient grace of the presence of His Holy Spirit.

LOCAL COMMITTEE AT NEW YORK

THE Local Committee at New York would make grateful record of the distinguished services of the Reverend Homer Eaton, D.D., LL.D., from 1889 to 1912 as one of the Publishing Agents of The Methodist Book Concern at New York, and since May, 1912, General Agent of The Methodist Book Concern, with headquarters at New York City. For nearly a quarter of a century, a period of service longer than that of any other Agent, Doctor Eaton has been intimately connected with the publishing interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to this branch of the Church's activities has given his undivided attention and his abundant strength. His labors and successes need not be enumerated here, inasmuch as the Book Committee at its coming session will do this, but we desire to bear witness to the very cordial relations which always existed between Doctor Eaton and this Committee, to his unmeasured devotion to the work committed to him by the Church, and to our sense of loss and sorrow at his death.

DREW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE REVEREND HOMER EATON, D.D., LL.D., for over twenty years a resident of Madison, New Jersey, and neighbor of Drew Theological Seminary, has for the last fifteen years been a member of her Board of Trustees. In this position Dr. Eaton has come into a relation to the entire life of the school at once unique and intimate. Dr. and Mrs. Eaton took up their residence in Madison after many years in the itinerancy and much thought as to the locality in which they should make their permanent earthly home. They selected a beautiful spot directly facing the property of the Seminary on Madison Avenue, and there built their stately house, not without reference to the life and atmosphere of Drew Forest. During all this period Dr. Eaton has been Agent of The Methodist Book Concern, so that he has been a factor, perhaps the chief factor, in the literary interests of the Church. He has also been prominent on the other Boards of Church administration, notably the missionary, dispensing as its treasurer between one and two millions of dollars annually. Moreover, his world-wide activities and travels have been linked in a peculiarly intimate way with the activities and world-wide influence of one of the centers of thought and power of the Ecumenical Church. Thus Dr. Eaton's residence among us has meant vastly more to the Seminary than we can easily estimate, or shall now attempt. But, above and beyond all this, we

have come to treasure the friendship and fellowship of Dr. Eaton because of the sterling quality and character of his own personality.

Dr. Eaton was a large man, a man of large mind and vision and heart. He was a generous man, with ample ideas, and marked ability to express them, and a life-long habit in sharing and extending them; for he was a born leader, and was recognized everywhere for his sagacity and charm in molding and moving the choices of his fellow men.

And now our father, full of years and of honors, our brother, full of trophies from all fields, and our friend, full of affections and sympathies from ever-widening circles, has fallen on sleep, and we shall see his face in Drew no more. Our familiar and our more formal gatherings shall no longer find easy focus and converse about his martial form. But he is still living, and shall live in our hearts, and evermore shall his spirit and influence remain a vital factor in our school.

We share with the wife of his bosom the deep sorrow that his departure brings, and we share with her and with the whole community and with the Christian world the splendid heritage of his great love and his great life.

*Minute adopted by the Faculty and Students of
Drew Theological Seminary, February 12, 1913.*

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EM-
PLOYEES OF THE METHODIST
BOOK CONCERN AT NEW YORK

AT a largely attended meeting of the employees of The Methodist Book Concern, of representatives of the Board of Foreign Missions and of other benevolent societies with headquarters in the building, held at 1:00 o'clock P.M., Tuesday, February 11th, the following paper was unanimously adopted as representing the common interest felt in the decease of Doctor Eaton:

In the death of Reverend Homer Eaton, D.D., LL.D., one who for a longer term of years than any other in its entire history has been an Official Publisher of The Methodist Book Concern, and its first General Agent, we keenly realize that we have all lost a friend and brother, and recognizing that The Methodist Book Concern is bereaved of one of its most conspicuous Official Agents, that the Board of Foreign Missions is deprived of one who has been one of its most prominent members, and who has long and reliably served as the Treasurer of its funds, and that the Church at large has been called upon to part with one of its most honored and trusted counselors:—

We desire to put on record an expression of the sense of loss, of the high esteem, and of the affectionate regard in which we shall hold the memory of a good and noble man who has gone from our presence. And also to express to Mrs. Eaton at this time of her bereavement and sorrow the assurance of our deep and heartfelt sympathy.

FROM THE ADVOCATES

THE TRANSLATION OF HOMER EATON

THE NEW YORK CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

THE evening shadows of a beautiful Sabbath having closed round his dwelling, Homer Eaton responded to the summons of his Lord, and quietly slipped away from a world he had striven to make better by loyal service. That he has entered into the day which shall never decline no one doubts who knew his faith and practice. He was born in Enosburg, Vt., November 16, 1834. His father, Bennett Eaton, was a local preacher, and regularly supplied pastoral charges within convenient reach of his farm, until he joined the Troy Conference in 1850. He was later for a brief time a member of the Vermont Conference. The mother of Homer Eaton was Betsey Maria Webster, whose family originally came from Warwickshire, England, and included Noah Webster, the lexicographer. She was a woman of remarkable ability, and lived to be more than ninety years of age.

Homer Eaton began his preparatory studies at the Academy in Bakersfield, Vt., and finished them at the Methodist General Biblical Institute in Concord, N. H. In 1857 he entered Troy Conference, where he served the following appointments: 1857, Vail Avenue, Troy, N. Y.; '58-'59, Castleton; '60-'61, Fultonville; '62-'63, Fort Plain; '64-'66, Greenbush; '67-'68, Amsterdam; '69-'71, Washington Street, West Troy; '72-'74, Grace, Albany; '75, Canajoharie; '76-'79, Presiding Elder, Albany District; '80-'81, Saratoga Springs; '82-'84,

Presiding Elder, Cambridge District; '86-'88, Burlington, Vt. On April 28, 1858, he married Miss Hannah Saxe, of Sheldon, Vt. Since February, 1889, he had been one of the publishing agents of The Methodist Book Concern in New York. The General Conference of 1912 having determined to elect four Publishing Agents to conduct the affairs of the Book Concern, one of whom should be designated as the General Agent, Dr. Eaton was chosen to fill this office.

Dr. Eaton was a member of ten General Conferences, first in 1872, and then continuously from 1880 to 1912. In 1881 and 1901 he was a delegate to the Ecumenical Methodist Conference in London, and he was fraternal delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada in 1874. He was a trustee of Syracuse University and of Drew Theological Seminary, and took an active interest in these and other institutions. From 1880 to 1888 he was a member of the Book Committee. He received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Syracuse University in 1879 and the degree of Doctor of Laws from that institution in 1907 and from Nebraska Wesleyan University in 1909. He had been Treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions since 1896.

Human ingenuity has succeeded in reproducing by a system of notation the musical values of various natural objects so that they can be apprehended by both eye and ear. For example, "every tree, according to its foliage, its position, and the direction of the wind, has its own prevalent note or tone, which can be marked down and its timbre made first visible by this notation, and then audible." Every person-

ality has also its own characteristic tone, so that by a spiritual sense it is possible for us to distinguish the fundamental quality of any character. Each man's life conveys certain impressions which are common to all who observe him. It is only those who are most intimately associated with him, however, who distinguish the more delicate refinements of his nature. These principles are apparent when we attempt to estimate the character of Homer Eaton. Only those who shared his inmost life can speak adequately of his finer spiritual essence. All who were thrown into association with him immediately recognized the bolder features of his noble personality.

No man ever met Homer Eaton in the most casual way without being impressed that he was a man of extraordinary power. The dignified placidity of his face, the calm and steady look of his eye, the masterful pose of his body, and the deliberate mode of his speech, together with the measured judgment with which he expressed his opinions, would convince any reflecting person that he was a man of strong will and keen intellect. He was not a man given to unnecessary speech. Though a conspicuous figure in the councils of the Church for nearly a half century, he was not accustomed to indulge in prolonged or frequent debate. Particularly was this true of his later years. Those who served with him in various official capacities will remember that apparently he uttered his speeches during a public discussion at the precise point where they would accomplish the greatest result with the least consumption of time. Often he would seem to wait until the involved cir-

cumstances of the case required a cool but intrepid analysis. He would then quickly solve the problem by a few well-considered sentences, to the relief of many who had not so clearly discerned a way out of the difficulty.

It was largely due to his intellectual equipment, sustained by a moral character of singular purity and simplicity, that he was summoned to the responsible position of Book Agent, which was left vacant by the death of John M. Phillips in 1889. The enormous business of The Methodist Book Concern requires greater managerial abilities than most institutions of its sort, and it is only truth to say that Dr. Eaton's work during the past twenty-four years in this great undertaking has shown both sagacity and foresight to an unusual degree. As Treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions his work has been of the highest value and his appreciation of the missionary problems has been keen and sympathetic.

It would not be strange if a man charged with such vast obligations should become so absorbed in the magnitude of his work as to be detached from a personal interest in the great body of men under his employ, but it is the testimony of those who have been in The Methodist Book Concern since the day Homer Eaton appeared that he always gave earnest and sympathetic attention to the problems and difficulties of the men associated together under his direction. Dr. Eaton was the personification of kindness. This made his friendship a very costly thing to him in some instances; but he never scrupled to sacrifice his time and energy in behalf of one whom he desired to assist.

In the days when he was a presiding elder he did much to strengthen the financial support given to the preachers under his supervision, but he was equally assiduous in his attempts to help the churches of his several districts to secure the best service which their needs required. He was early marked out as a safe man to represent the Conference of which he was a member at the General Conference. The single interruption in the consecutiveness of his numerous elections to this body was caused by his own determination that another should go in his stead.

The strain of his great office upon heart and mind was relieved by a genial humor, which seemed to run through every phase of his life. Within very recent days, speaking of his increasing years, he intimated that the end of life could not be far distant, but spoke of the conclusion of his journey in terms of serene and cheerful acquiescence. What Robert Browning said of himself and his conception of death might have been properly uttered by the lips of Homer Eaton: "Without death, which is our church-yardy, crape-like word for change, for growth, there could be no prolongation of that which we call life. Never say of me that I am dead."

It will be a long time before his friends and kindred can realize that Homer Eaton is not still tarrying in this world. Even when they shall have been compelled to admit that he has vanished from their presence, they will still be assured that the influence of his service to humanity and the Church abides in the beneficent products of his heart and brain. In some of his experience he was like a strong tower

in a tempestuous sea, lifting its height above the tumbling waves, and sending its gleam far across the angry billows. He was a brave man, with a big brain and a warm heart. The comrade of his years, the faithful wife who shared the anxieties of his public service and eased the burdens of his heart, will have the earnest prayers and sympathy of thousands of Christians who saw in her valiant husband a type of character worthy of deep reverence and love.

HOMER EATON

THE REV. H. C. JENNINGS, D.D., IN THE
WESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

THERE are men who are so symmetrical in character, temperament, and effectiveness that we do not take much note of their strength and power until the shock of their absence arouses us; they grow in such steady strength and mastery of their tasks that we take it as a matter of course that they will continue to do so.

Dr. Eaton was a man who in the prime of his manhood was competent to take a large place and do a great work because in his youth he had settled the question of what he should believe. As life always follows opinion, and no man is better than his creed, he brought forth fruit even into old age, because he was rooted and grounded in the faith. To this much we are able to testify thankfully, because of our rather intimate association with him for many years. In the quiet hour of the late evening, after a hard day in Conference or committee work, we

have sat together and talked of things that were greater than our present tasks, and to which all our tasks were leading, for we had much in common in creed and mutual sympathy, and our work, which was closely allied.

Dr. Eaton gave his heart a chance; the demands of a strenuous life were many upon him; he was always in the thick of things and never far from the front rank in every battle which the Church has been waging for a generation. His love of fellowship, his willingness to talk of intimate things, the saving grace of quiet humor, and his hearty interest in the personal affairs and needs of those about him and under him were phases of character which greatly strengthened his influence. He came up steadily through many years of cumulative service in his Conference; he knew all phases of the itinerancy; he often spoke in his later years of the happy life of an effective pastor, and of the joy he had in the fact that so many of his years had been spent in that work. He came into early recognition in the life of the general Church; only now and then a man becomes a member of the chief governing body of the Church at so early an age, and very seldom indeed is it that any man in our history has had membership in ten General Conferences to his credit.

Never a great talker, never with any pretense of the orator about him, he has not been known in that capacity; but for sturdy common sense, for wide information concerning all the affairs of the Church, for unflinching loyalty, sometimes at great cost to himself, for the ability to say the right thing, and

to say it at the right time, he has not been exceeded by any who have been in the chief councils of the Church.

He did not give up his friends; if he was disappointed in them, still he held to them; there was a steadfastness about him which it was good to know and feel.

Dr. Eaton was very greatly interested in the later developments of the Book Concern, and accepted all new legislation not as a reactionary but as a loyal servant of the Church. The place of general supervision which came to him in the office of General Agent, conferred by the Book Committee at the close of the General Conference, he accepted, and began at once the study of the larger problems which confronted the position as yet untried and to a certain degree undefined. The brotherly courtesy which was manifested in his relation to his associates was greatly appreciated; he was working his way toward the mastery of the task which had been given him, and in it he was fortified by the long experience of nearly six quadrenniums in which he had been an official publisher of Church literature. He came to the Book Concern as Agent in his prime, in 1889; such a work is not an easy task, to have large responsibility in the selection of what shall be read throughout a wide Church; to so manage and control such a business requires a steadiness of nerve, a power of quick decision, an insight into the future, which is not the usual task set to a Methodist preacher. A business house such as The Methodist Book Concern must take its chances with other houses of the business world;

it must withstand fluctuations in the markets, possible panics, changing demands on the part of a reading public. This man was confronting the problem of how to take advantage of markets; make the best contracts with all kinds of men; keep the credit of the House in perfect order; understand the thing next necessary to be done in the work of publishing; have personal authority and charge over a great force of employees, all of whom the Church expects to work at a profit; attend to an almost unlimited correspondence; make the path of the disappointed author a little easier, placate the author whose book does not sell largely enough to suit him; answer a thousand questions, some of small and some of larger import, which come to him steadily; meet all kinds of people, contractors, agents, business men, investment men, people with complaints, people with criticisms, and occasionally people with modest praise for the success of the House; and all these nearly every day in every week of every month for four and twenty years; and he stood through it all straightforward, placid, good-natured, optimistic.

The manner of his going was like him. We may safely say that when men come to die they usually think and say the things they have been thinking and saying while in their strength, and Dr. Eaton, up to that last hour, was as interested and as thoroughly awake to all the interests and affairs of the Church he loved as ever he had been in his strength. I think I could not choose for him a form of passing which would appeal to me so perfectly as the knowledge that he went out instantly to the larger life

beyond, while thinking and speaking of the daily life and incidents of the Church as reflected in the columns of his favorite Church paper, hoping and expecting still to live and serve, yet with no tasks undone, no preparations unmade; he was as ready to go on the instant when the call came as he could possibly have been.

The home funeral service at Madison, where he had lived so long, just on the edge of the Drew Seminary campus, was helpful and comforting. The house was filled with those who loved him best; his friends and immediate neighbors were there, and many others who had journeyed to the place for that hour. Dr. Tipple, president of Drew Theological Seminary, had charge of the service; several of Dr. Eaton's companions in work took part; Bishop Wilson, Dr. Rogers, and Dr. Buttz gave brief addresses fitting to the time and occasion. The house was banked with flowers; there was no jar in the harmony of the occasion. The body was taken to New York, and rested for the night in the chapel of the Book Concern, under a guard of honor, and at ten o'clock on Thursday, February 13, the memorial service was held. The great room was filled, as were all the rooms opening into it. There was not only a large representation from New York and its immediate vicinity, but the presence was noted of many of our chief ministers and others from more distant points. The service, in charge of Dr. Tipple, was one of perfect appropriateness. Telegrams of sympathy and appreciation, and resolutions of various bodies were read, and addresses made by Bishop Wilson, Dr. Frank Mason North, and Dr.

George P. Mains. Bishop Berry, Dr. A. B. Leonard, Dr. H. A. Buttz, and others participated in the service. The entire force of Book Concern employees was present, manifesting sorrow and confidence in the departure of this good man. We shall not forget him; how could we? We shall miss him in our councils; we shall not quite see his like again. He is not dead, but gone to a larger service.

DR. HOMER EATON

THE CENTRAL CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

THERE is living to-day scarcely a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this land who is not familiar with the name of Homer Eaton. The name is more widely known than that of any living bishop. Billions of pages of reading matter have gone forth from the presses of the Church having on their title page the firm name of Hunt & Eaton and Eaton & Mains. That firm name has stood for the highest uplands of Christian literature; it has been the guarantee of the quality of the materials which have been the pabulum of millions of the youth in our Sunday schools; it has been the imprimatur of multiplied thousands of books. Like the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations, the presses supervised by Homer Eaton have flung forth to the ends of the planet the leaves for the healing of the sin-cursed and brier-bearing world of men.

Homer Eaton was born in the parsonage of a Methodist itinerant. Who that in the deep intimacies of which Homer Eaton was capable when the hour

was late and the mood drifted into confidence has not heard some story, told with unaffected feeling, of those days when in the rough hills of Vermont his father rode the circuit, and year after year took his family to the new charge. The general minutes do not give the "salary" of Bennett Eaton, that year 1834 on the Enosburg Circuit, when a babe was born; perhaps the "salary" was so small the historian could not find it. None the less, such was the passion for souls of that physical giant, such the devotion of his wife, that with all their privations they so exalted the vocation of the ministry that at least two of their sons entered the ministry and one of them was destined to distinction, to whatever immortality of reputation a long association with the greatest publishing plant in evangelical Christendom could confer.

It must have been the observation of all who were permitted to penetrate the sacred friendship of Dr. Homer Eaton, that nothing gave him much more pleasure than to toss out as a trifle the memories of the hardships of those days, when he lived, as it were, in the moving van of the itinerant.

He was converted in one of the revivals held by his own father when he was but sixteen. Instantly there came upon him the full persuasion that he, too, must preach the gospel. Instantly he began to think of a higher education. He went to the academy at Bakersfield, Vt., and then to Concord, N. H., to enter the famous Biblical Institute. He graduated here in 1857, and immediately, at the age of twenty-two, knocked at the door of the Troy Annual Conference,

that year holding its second session at Pittsfield, Mass., Bishop Baker presiding.

The young man was a physical giant; he had the perfection of health and manly beauty; he was consumed with ardor for the Master's business; his mellow voice carried far when he preached in the open air. He had a companionable habit that characterized him to the very end; this made him always youthful, always a confidant, always a counselor, and marked him from the very first as a man destined to leadership.

He was twenty-two when he entered the ministry; he had passed through his Conference Course of study but two years when he was made assistant secretary of Troy Conference, which position he held for nine years, when, at the age of thirty-five, he was advanced to the secretaryship. He was but thirty-six when he was first elected to General Conference. The next quadrennium he was a reserve delegate. From that period until his death Troy Conference was represented by Homer Eaton in our supreme legislature. He was nine times a member of the General Conference, having a record approached by but few.

During these years he was presiding elder of at least two districts, Albany and Saratoga. Since the telegram announcing his death came in, one who joined the Troy Conference under his presiding eldership has borne abounding testimony to the generous and companionable character of the man, how he was the model of this young minister, how his big form, towering among the others in any gathering, stood for his character, granite-like, four-square, but

gentle as the column which is festooned with flowering vines.

In 1880 Dr. Eaton was made a member of the Book Committee, where he had such fellows as Clem Studebaker, Leroy Belt, D. C. John, Clinton B. Fisk, John B. Cornell, Amos Shinkle, and we may add Francis S. Beggs and Philip G. Gillett. The Book Committee elected the young man chairman of the committee. He was again put in that committee when William F. Whitlock, W. H. Olin, Thomas N. Boyle, J. C. W. Coxe, William Hoyt, and Richard Dymond appear. The next General Conference filled the place he had occupied with another. But that was his fortune, because on January 15 of the following year (1889) John M. Phillips, who for five quadrenniums had been elected publishing agent, died. The Book Committee met within a few weeks, and on a Thursday night, when Dr. Eaton was conducting the midweek prayer meeting in his church in Burlington, Vt., a telegram announced to him that the Book Committee had chosen him to succeed one of the greatest publishers the Book Concern has ever had. How wise was the choice is a matter of history. Six General Conferences reaffirmed the estimate of the Book Committee by re-electing Dr. Eaton, so on the day of his death he had been almost to a day for twenty-four years the honored masterbuilder of our great publishing house.

By the time of Dr. Eaton's advent as master of the Book Concern, the business had already become enormous. Six and a half million dollars of periodical and other literature were sold during the quadrennium

ending May, 1888. In the twenty-four years in which Dr. Eaton's name appears on the output of the Book Concern, the business rose to nearly two hundred million dollars. This great expansion was due to a combination of many forces, but among the premier forces, certainly, were the energies and sagacity and nobility of Dr. Eaton. During the last quadrennium the output of English and German periodicals was not less than three hundred million copies and scarcely less than five billion pages. With the traditions of the Book Concern he was saturated. In his speech at the last General Conference Anniversary of the Book Concern he spoke of how his mind instinctively went back, through the hundred and twenty-three years of history, to the small and unpretentious assembly room of Old John Street Church in the City of New York, when Francis Asbury and the twenty preachers in Conference assembled in May, 1789, organized The Methodist Book Concern. In that Conference sat with Asbury Thomas Coke, the Oxford scholar; Freeborn Garrettson, the giant; the modest yet far-seeing John Dickins, who was elected Book Steward, or Publishing Agent, as we would say now.

Dr. Eaton could never dwell with an intensity equal to his enthusiasm on the records made by this institution on which for so many years was placed his guiding hand. Beginning with a borrowed capital of six hundred dollars, it has breasted every adverse tide of business depression, of church division in '44, and changing civilization. "And," exclaimed Dr. Eaton in his Minneapolis address, "what do we see to-day

as the result of the optimism and courage of John Dickins? Throughout the long period of its existence The Methodist Book Concern has gone steadily forward in its work, until it has attained the highest rank among the publishing houses of the world."

He was fraternal delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada, a delegate to the Ecumenical Conference in London. He was for a generation treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions. He was trustee and counselor of several universities and theological schools. Some years ago he was sent to China and Japan to inspect our printing business in those lands, and also to report on missionary conditions. He was made a Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws.

It has often occurred to us that the sources of Dr. Eaton's strength were largely found in his domestic life. The house in which he lived in Madison, N. J., was planned by himself and wife, and anyone could see that the rules of architecture existed for them only to carry out their domestic felicity. Comfort, flowers, family traditions marked the modest mansion standing in its broad lawn fronting the campus of Drew Seminary, and shaded with many trees. Out of that domestic happiness he came with his giant strength day after day to his tasks. In reality it is not wonderful that at seventy-nine his strength was so superb or his daily life so balanced and even. He came up to the limit of threescore years and ten with clearness of vision, a contemporary of the youngest writers and, we may say, a patron of them.

Those who go up to the Annual Meeting of the

Book Committee will miss Dr. Homer Eaton as a friend and lover misses the vacant chair. There will linger in the memory of his associates the picture of a strong man of clear brain, without affectation, with directness of speech and kindness of heart; and life can never be quite the same until we meet again in the Morning Land.

Dr. Eaton died suddenly last Sunday night in Madison, New Jersey.

HOMER EATON, D.D., LL.D.

CALIFORNIA CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

THE death of Dr. Homer Eaton, announced last week in the Advocate, calls in sorrow the attention of the Church to one of her most esteemed and most useful servants. He was born in Enosburg, Vt., November 16, 1834, the son of the Rev. Bennett Eaton. He was educated in the Public Schools, Bakersfield Academy, Vermont, and Concord Theological Seminary, entering the ministry in 1857. From 1857 to 1889 he served as pastor and district superintendent in the Troy Conference. He has been a member of every General Conference since 1872, except that of 1876. He has served as fraternal delegate to the Canadian Methodist Conference. In 1881 and in 1901 he was a delegate to the Ecumenical Conferences. In 1889, upon the death of Publishing Agent Phillips, he became the Publishing Agent with Dr. Hunt. He has served the Church in the capacity of trustee of various colleges and seminaries. He has also been treasurer of the Missionary Society for a

score of years. In all these responsible places Dr. Eaton has rendered conspicuous and efficient service. It has come to few men in the history of our American Methodism to render such a large volume of service to the Church.

Dr. Eaton had a constructive mind. Again and again in the struggle and tangle of committee work in the General Conference and in the general committees on Missions Dr. Eaton presented a plan so comprehensive, so clear, and so adequate as to often gain the instant consent of the whole committee. He familiarized himself with the details of his work, and not in the history of his connection with the Missionary Society do we remember that he ever hesitated for a moment in a clear explanation of every question, however remote in its reference, which arose concerning his reports. Literally millions of dollars passed through his hands every year, coming and going in small and great amounts. It came from Conferences, from estates, from individual donations, from lapsed annuities, from interest, from compound interest, but from all these bewildering sources he never allowed a moment of confusion to arise. He was a master of details, and had he given his energies to secular business there is not a bank in the United States he could not have successfully guided. He certainly has rendered a service to the Missionary Society not soon to be forgotten. Such was his business sagacity and his painstaking care that he commanded the confidence of the New York financiers. If the Missionary Society needed \$100,000 or \$200,000, Dr. Eaton, as treasurer of that Society, was able always to secure it

on a moment's notice. He may not be remembered as a great financier, and yet in the administration of a financial system reaching literally to the ends of the earth he has shown a power and comprehension of financial details not excelled by many of the great bankers and railway presidents in the United States.

It was, however, as Publishing Agent that Dr. Homer Eaton rendered his greatest service to Methodism. For almost exactly twenty-four years he served the Church in that capacity. There is no need of piling up the enormous aggregates of the Book Concern business and profits in order to show his work in concrete form. With a level eye, a steady hand, an enthusiastic heart, day in and day out, week after week, month after month, year upon year, the mind and soul of Dr. Eaton were given to the advancement of the publishing interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first great speech we heard Dr. Eaton make was at the Committee on Book Concern in 1900 at Chicago. His contention was that the primary object of the Publishing House, the Book Concern, was not financial gain, not even for so laudable a cause as the support of the Superannuates, but its great purpose was the spread of religious literature. He stood all the years of his administration for that policy. The pressure for financial assets and profits from the Book Concern he felt called upon to resist. The only adequate reason why the Church should enter the publishing field is a religious reason. The Book Concern should pour out a stream of health-giving literature if it had to run even at an enormous loss. He put the whole emphasis of his administration

on the problem of sending to the ends of the earth a rich, clean, powerful Christian literature. If we subtract his services as pastor, preacher, district superintendent for thirty-two years, take out of the account his score of years as treasurer of the Missionary Society, overlook his services as a member of ten General Conferences, as a most efficient working member of the general committees on missions, his inspirational addresses at the Annual Conferences, we still have the enormous bulk of service he has given the Church as Publishing Agent.

Dr. Eaton was tall, commanding in physical appearance. His face was large and in many ways reminded his friends of General Robert E. Lee. He was generous and noble in all his bearing. To know Homer Eaton was to like him. He was the soul of honor and good will. The nearer you got to him the better you liked him. There was something princely in his personal bearing. If he had a fault it was in his tremendous loyalty to his friends. He always found time to speak to them and made them feel that he cared for them more than he cared for petty demands of a tyrannous business. His religious experience was of a plain, simple, practical, unostentatious, but genuine normal sort. His faith was of the steady, fundamental type. His spirit was broad, hearty, courageous, kindly, tender, and true. He combined as large a measure of conciliation, concord, co-operation, with fundamental firmness, steadfastness of principles as any man we have known. His life has been profitably spent, not only in concrete and tangible assets, but profitable as measured in the higher values of

Christian fellowship and of the ministrations of a consecrated life.

Mrs. Eaton, whom he married in 1858, was Miss Hannah Saxe, the sister of Dr. A. W. Saxe, for many years the tower of strength in our Santa Clara, Cal., Methodism. Mrs. Eaton has the prayerful sympathy of the Church whose interests both she and her distinguished husband have served so long and so well.

A PRINCE IN ISRAEL HAS FALLEN

THE SOUTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

IT will be a distinct shock to world-wide Methodism to receive the sad intelligence that the Rev. Homer Eaton, D.D., General Publishing Agent of The Methodist Book Concern, died suddenly at his home in Madison, N. J., Sunday night, February ninth. In his death Methodism loses one of its stalwart men. While it cannot be said that he was generally assertive in the public assemblies of the Church, yet, when the occasion demanded and his whole nature was aroused, he would become a formidable champion or opponent, as the case might be, of the subject under consideration. He was truly one of the foremost men of Methodism. In spite of his advanced years (for he celebrated his seventy-eighth birthday November sixteenth, last), to all appearances he was in vigorous health, and the Church expected that he would close the present quadrennium and probably retire at the next General Conference, with years yet to receive the blessings of the Church that

he had loved so ardently and served so devotedly. It was a tribute to his long service in connection with our publishing interest that the Book Committee elected him last May as General Agent of the Book Concern. Had he lived only four days longer he would have completed twenty-four full years as Publishing Agent of The Methodist Book Concern, a record probably unparalleled in Methodist history. During the six quadrenniums that he served the Church in the capacity of Publishing Agent, he had seen the business increase many fold. He gave himself unreservedly to this one work and proved himself to be an efficient and thoroughly capable publisher. While he was devoted to the publishing interests of the Church, he was thoroughly familiar with the whole Church, and was generally informed on all the Church's activities. Dr. Eaton had served the Church for sixteen years as treasurer of the Missionary Society. In the meetings of the General Conference Committees on Foreign Missions he was remarkably clear on the propositions which he would champion, and whatever thought he advanced received the earnest consideration of his brethren. He was safe in judgment, forceful in public address, and was, by nature, a leader of men. He was one of the most remarkable men of our latter-day Methodism. Tall in body, he was tall in character; big in brain, he was big in heart; he was magnanimous and brotherly at all times. Much loved, greatly honored, his death will be widely mourned.

Dr. Eaton inherited a good name in Methodist history. His father was an active member of the

Troy Conference for many years and represented the Troy Conference in the General Conference of 1868. The Rev. Homer Eaton was born in Enosburg, Vt., November 16, 1834. He was converted at the age of sixteen years, and soon thereafter felt himself called to the work of the Christian ministry. He commenced his preparatory studies at the Academy in Bakersfield, Vt., and finished them at the Methodist General Biblical Institute, in Concord, N. H.

Homer Eaton and his brother, Joel W. Eaton, the latter three years the senior, joined the Troy Conference in 1857. Dr. Homer Eaton gave to the Church a continuous service in the active ranks of fifty-six years. Dr. Joel Eaton died a short while ago. Homer Eaton was elected secretary of his Conference soon after his election to elder's orders and held the position for many years. Dr. Homer Eaton was elected to the General Conference first in 1872, was a member of the General Conferences of 1880, 1884, 1888, 1892, 1896, 1900, 1904, 1908, and 1912. He was not a member of the General Conference of 1876, but his brother Joel was, and Dr. Homer was a reserve delegate. The two brothers were members of the Troy delegation at two General Conferences—1880 and 1892. When Dr. Homer Eaton was first elected a member of the General Conference, his brother, Dr. Joel W., was the chief reporter, having charge of the stenographic report of the General Conference in 1872. Such a record on the part of two brothers can hardly be duplicated in Methodism. In 1872 Dr. Homer Eaton was chosen one of the fraternal delegates to the General Conference of the Methodist

Episcopal Church in Canada. He was a delegate to the first Ecumenical Conference, held in London, in 1881. He served two full terms as presiding elder, and was considered one of the most successful pastors of his Conference. At the time of his election as Publishing Agent he was in his third year as pastor at Burlington, Vt., which charge had unanimously voted requesting his return for the fourth year. Dr. Eaton was a member of the Book Committee from 1880 to 1888, and was chairman for the first four years. He was a member of the Commission on General Conference Entertainment in 1884, and secretary of that Commission.

John M. Phillips, the senior Publishing Agent at New York, the first layman elected to that position, died on the fifteenth of January, 1889. For seventeen years he had occupied that position and was also treasurer of the Missionary Society. At the next Book Committee meeting, held in New York on February thirteenth, one of the first things done was to fill the vacancy created by the death of Mr. Phillips. At that session of the Book Committee C. B. Fisk was chairman of the Eastern section and W. F. Whitlock of the Western section. Amos Shinkle was chairman of the General Committee, and David H. Moore secretary. The election of the Publishing Agent to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Phillips was fixed as the order of the day for 2:30 P. M. On the first ballot 19 votes were cast. Necessary to choice, 10. Homer Eaton received 11; Henry W. Knight, 4; J. P. Hammond, 1. There were 3 blank votes. Dr. Eaton was declared elected. Bishops Foster, Andrews,

Foss, Hurst, and Joyce were present and concurred in the election. The new Publishing Agent was not present, but was summoned by wire. Upon the request of Dr. Hunt, Dr. Eaton was elected treasurer of the Episcopal Fund. At the General Conference, held in 1892, at Omaha, Dr. Eaton was elected Publishing Agent, and has been elected at every General Conference since.

Dr. Eaton was in every way thoroughly interested in our work in the South, and showed special interest in the SOUTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE. Our quarters were burned January 31, 1898. We were occupying, at that time, the second floor of 429 Carondelet Street. The editor, who was attending the Florida Conference, was summoned home by telegraph and returned to find a sad and dejected office force. But what else could be expected?—burned out, homeless, turned into the street, and, while there were funds to rent comfortable quarters, comfortable quarters were not to be had. We had made arrangements to occupy the third floor at 419 Carondelet Street, and were in the midst of cleaning the dirty, dingy rooms and re-establishing ourselves when, to our utter surprise, in the midst of our confusion and discouragement, Dr. Homer Eaton appeared on the scene. His coming was a benediction and an inspiration. He was not long in sizing up the situation. He said the time had come when the SOUTHWESTERN should own its own quarters. From New Orleans Dr. Eaton went to the meeting of the Book Committee in Cincinnati and, presenting the option on the present piece of property, secured an immediate appropriation of \$12,000 and

purchased the same. It was never his privilege to see the building complete in every detail; he was here, however, when repairs were near completion. He is to be remembered in many ways for his manifested interest in this publication.

Doctor Eaton is survived by his widow, who lives at Madison, N. J., and to her the fullest sympathy of the Church will be poured out, and many prayers will go up to the good All-Father that she may be sustained in this trying hour.

DR. HOMER EATON

THE PACIFIC CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

A PRINCE in Israel has fallen! On Monday morning the Editor received the following words which brought news that cut to the very quick and which will carry sorrow to thousands of hearts: "Dr. Homer Eaton died suddenly at his home in Madison yesterday (Saturday)." Signed George P. Mains.

When Mr. John M. Phillips, the first layman to hold the office of Publishing Agent, died at New York in January, 1889, Dr. Homer Eaton was chosen by the Book Committee to fill the vacancy, and was associated with Dr. Sandford Hunt. The firm name then stood, Hunt & Eaton, until the General Conference of 1896 elected Dr. George P. Mains to fill the vacancy made by the death of Dr. Hunt, which occurred in February just preceding the General Conference. Dr. Eaton was born in Vermont, November 16, 1834, converted at the age of sixteen, and was

called into the ministry while but a boy. His record has been a long and rather remarkable one. He has served the Church in various capacities and always with credit to himself and the denomination of his choice. As secretary of the Troy Conference, delegate to the General Conference, fraternal delegate, and member of the Book Committee and other positions of trust, he has served with highest acceptability. He has been a delegate to every General Conference since 1872, with one exception (that of 1876, when he was a reserve delegate), and has led his delegation several times. He was a tall, commanding figure, with a strong stentorian voice, and spoke with convincing authority. Dr. Eaton was a man of large experience, ripe wisdom, spotless integrity, and of fine business ability and superior financial skill.

Dr. Eaton has seen the growth of the Book Concern from a net capital of \$3,130,956.09 to over \$5,000,000.00, and the sales increase from \$8,186,437.53 for the quadrennium ending in 1892 to \$10,321,284.30 for the quadrennium ending in 1912. And during his incumbency The Methodist Book Concern has increased its dividends to the Annual Conferences from \$314,428 for the quadrennium ending in 1892 to \$780,000 for the last quadrennium. To no small degree was this magnificent record made possible by the superb ability of this man. The Church is poorer and society is poorer, but heaven is richer because Dr. Eaton has gone home. But earth will always be better because he lived.

THE GRAND OLD MAN OF THE
BOOK CONCERN

THE EPWORTH HERALD

DR. HOMER EATON, General Agent of The Methodist Book Concern, died at Madison, N. J., on Sunday, February 9. He was in his seventy-ninth year.

The name of Homer Eaton is bound up with a quarter century of Book Concern history. To the present generation of Methodists his name meant Book Concern, and that only. It is not easy to realize that back of his great career in the Concern there was a third of a century of efficiency in the pastorate.

But "Homer Eaton" goes far into the past. He was a Methodist preacher before Buchanan came to the presidency, and he did not begin as a boy preacher, either. His preparation was the best he could find in New England—Bakersfield Academy and the theological seminary at Concord, N. H., which later became the School of Theology of Boston University.

Homer Eaton was a giant in stature and in intellect, and he had a great heart. To the casual observer he seemed something reserved and stern, but there was a cheery glint in his eye, if you looked closely enough, and his was as genial a soul as the Lord made in his generation.

In an assemblage his tall form and his great voice made him conspicuous. In the General Con-

ference he did not speak often, but when he spoke he was heard and his words were heeded. His bodily and mental vigor was unimpaired almost to the last, and he looked ten years under his age.

It is too soon to gather up and estimate all the workings of his influence on the Book Concern, and on the New York house especially, where he was Publishing Agent from 1889 to 1912. But no history of the book interests of the Church could be written, now or a century from now, without a large recognition of Homer Eaton's influence on its development. Last summer, under the new law now governing the Concern, he was made General Agent, and his responsibilities put him in touch with its whole work.

He was treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions, and a notable figure in the Board's councils. This work was to him of the highest importance, and, though he had large duties of many sorts in other directions, the Book Concern and the foreign missions occupied his heart.

PERSONAL TRIBUTES

PERSONAL TRIBUTES

BISHOP EARL CRANSTON

FOR many years he had been to me not "Doctor," but just Homer Eaton. Thrown together in the service of the Church, we were soon drawn together in mutual confidence and affection, and never was there a breach in our friendship or a break in our understanding of each other. Great issues have been fought out in the Church during those years, but though I am sure we must have disagreed on some of them, I cannot recall now what ones they were, so deep and even was the flow of our undisturbed friendship at all times. The last time we met, only the other day it seems, we had much satisfaction in the mention of this fact. As he loomed in stature, so did Homer Eaton stand tall in his manhood. Stalwart as he was in his convictions, and sometimes aroused to tremendous directness and force in his utterance of them, I never saw him exultant in victory or sullen in defeat. Though conservative by nature, he was yet open-eyed for real improvement in the administration of his office. He was so intensely loyal to the Church, and to his conception of official duty, that his chief satisfaction in living was the success he achieved in meeting the demands of the great trusts imposed upon his integrity and ability. Yet he was genial and companionable with all his associates, and rarely too busy for a little jollity. I could never detect that his years abated his enthusiasm for

his work, nor had I a thought when I saw him last that I should see him no more on earth. But so it was ordered, and all who loved him have now a new reason to thank God that such men live forever. Among the many strong and honored men who have served our Church in places of high trust, Homer Eaton's long and conspicuous record will assure to his name lasting recognition.

BISHOP JOHN M. WALDEN

HOMER EATON has long been the recognized representative member of the Troy Conference, one of the great Conferences of Methodism, including sections of Massachusetts, Vermont, and New York, Albany, the capital, being near the center of this Conference. Forty-five years ago I first saw the Conference in session and was deeply impressed with it as a body of strong, devoted Methodist preachers of that day. Other official visits have kept me advised as to this fine body of men and their successful work. Here Homer Eaton had his lifelong Conference membership. They knew him intimately. They recorded their estimate of his character and abilities by keeping him through the years in the forefront of those they honored and trusted. This is the reliable testimonial to the worth and work of Homer Eaton to which I refer with supreme satisfaction.

His relation to the Missionary Society and work was particularly marked. But it was more than a business interest. At the North Germany Conference at Heilbronn he first had opportunity to witness our

Methodism in the Fatherland. There are some things in German service that can be understood without any interpreter save the Holy Spirit. He more than enjoyed the spiritual power of the services. From his own words it is evident that he, the treasurer, studied the spiritual work in all the missions he visited and judged it by the highest measure of efficiency. In every position he honored his Church by serving it well.

BISHOP DAVID H. MOORE

MY acquaintance with Dr. Eaton began at the General Conference of 1880, when he and Mrs. Eaton, with the other Troy Conference delegates, were my guests in the Cincinnati Wesleyan College, of which I was then president. Acquaintance soon ripened into respect and admiration. His rating for Christian manhood and ecclesiastical and business ability had steadily advanced from year to year. Later, when secretary of the Book Committee, of which he was a member, having observed his thorough comprehension of the details of our publishing interests, it was a pleasure to do what I could to elect him to the agency of the New York House made vacant by the death of John M. Phillips. His long and able service has demonstrated the wisdom of his choice.

He knew men, and knew how to win and hold their confidence and regard. He had an unaffected sociability which, while not abating his natural dignity, served to widen his influence. All his resources were consecrated to the success of the Concern, which

is the sufficient evidence of his business ability. We were fellow passengers to Japan when he first went out to inspect our Publishing House in Tokyo. Freed from the immediate engrossments of business, he gave free rein to his splendid spirit of comradeship, and was easily the dominant figure of the ship's company.

In his Madison home hospitality and gladness ever sat together in the cozy ingleside. My heart bleeds for her he loved so fondly, to whom its cheery glow is turned to ashes.

BISHOP JOHN W. HAMILTON

HOMER EATON by birth was of the sons of Anak, but by adoption a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He had lived neighbor to the Adirondacks until he was taller than Mount Marcy, the highest peak, as the man is taller than the mountain; he wore by nature the airs of a noble lineage. There was a majesty to his becoming, but his democracy was as unmistakable as his Methodism. With his longer reach he soon laid claim to the higher appointments. It was as natural to think of him for the presiding eldership as to think of Saul for the head of his line. He sang of Troy like the other Homer, until he came to the first place in the making of books. Brought up to the General Conference year after year by the esteem of his brethren, he stood next to the elect when he was chosen to the vacancy occasioned by the death of his predecessor. The hundreds of thousands came to millions of dollars in his hands. He had the instinct of business and the genius of the

publisher. He did most of his preaching through his distribution of the books of the great teachers and great preachers. He rose to the greatest advantage as the spokesman for the treasury of foreign missions in the general committees. His Christian virtues were as a stalwart river. His friendship was like that of Jonathan. His home was his castle. Possessing the knightly spirit, his death was of the knightly order. The chivalry of his fate was unpretentious, but he believed nobly with "a firm and sure knowledge of the Divine favor." He will stay long in our affections and memories.

BISHOP WILLIAM F. MCDOWELL

DR. HOMER EATON has been such a conspicuous figure in our Church life for so long a time that we shall not quite know how to get along without him. In a very unusual way his appearance indicated his character. He not only looked the man he was, he was every bit the man he looked. And that is saying a great deal. A certain list of terms comes almost involuntarily to mind as we think of him. He was rugged, upright, strong, safe, courageous, kind, devoted, honest, and faithful. I shall expect to see him characterized under all the figures that indicate strength and majesty. And those men who think of him as a tall pine, or a strong fortress, or as a shadow of a great rock, or liken him to the Vermont hills from which he came, will nevertheless have a strange sense of personal tenderness in their recollection, for he was as gentle as a child and

as affectionate a man as has lived among us in all the years. It is a great thing for the Church to produce such sons, and then through the years to command their splendid services.

BISHOP WILLIAM BURT

DR. EATON was not only tall physically, looking over the heads of most of us, but he was intellectually and morally tall. His vision was broad and took in the future, and he had the courage to plan and do tall things. He saw the relations of our work as a world-problem.

We shall greatly miss him in all the important enterprises of our Church, both home and abroad.

BISHOP RICHARD J. COOKE

ONE by one the tall cedars of Lebanon fall and leave a "lonesome place against the sky." For twenty-five years, and more, Dr. Eaton was a conspicuous figure in the affairs of the Church. Succeeding J. M. Phillips in New York as Publishing Agent, he held that position until the hour of his death. Of his services in detail and in gross, it is not necessary for me, at this time, to speak; enough to say that they were great; they were given with hearty good will and a driving energy which made things happen. As Book Editor of the Church for eight years, I was constantly associated with him in all that pertained to the printing of our publishing interests, and I can but bear testimony to his conscientiousness for things

which were largest and best. While he was Publishing Agent he was also treasurer of the Missionary Society. Millions of dollars passed through his hands, but not even a postage stamp ever stuck to his fingers. He was also connected with many boards of the Church and in all of them his advice was sought and his counsel followed. A tall, striking figure, he impressed everyone, but his strength and the real beauty of his character, which made him loved by all who knew him, was that which impressed men most. It is mighty evidence of the entering of the spirit of God in a church that can produce and maintain such men. The remembrance of him will long remain as the perfume stays when the vase is broken. Blessed be his memory.

BISHOP WILBUR P. THIRKIELD

IN the death of Dr. Homer Eaton the Church loses a man who has stood aloft as one of its tall pillars for a generation or more. In every position to which the Church has called him he has rendered strong and efficient service.

In his office as the Agent of The Methodist Book Concern, the entire Church has learned to know him, and his virile manhood, frankness, courage, and firmness have left a unique impress. Combined with these sterner qualities were a geniality and warmth that bound to him in friendship and Christian fellowship large groups of men.

DR. GEORGE P. MAINS, PUBLISHING AGENT OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, NEW YORK

DR. HOMER EATON, a Vermonter, tall, rugged, sun-crowned, like the peaks of his native State! Human to the core, large-hearted, kindly, generous, wise—a very Nestor among the counselors of the Church! In him was a native fund of waggery in the atmosphere of which all belligerency was disarmed, yet he was capable of treating subjects of most serious magnitude in a spirit worthy of their gravity. This man's escutcheon was without spot. Walking in the white light of the open, he commanded in public life for more than half a century the unclouded confidence of a great Church. A pastor in chief places, presiding elder, official publisher for a quarter of a century, treasurer of the Missionary Board, traveler in many lands—in all relations acquitting himself like a knight of honor.

The absence of a face so familiar, the departure from among us of a character so venerated, is like tearing from the local landscape of our lives a stalwart companion whose memory we must cherish, whose departure we can but mourn.

The high compensation for such a loss is furnished alone in our Christian faith. The man who was so stalwart here is stalwart there. The giant has shaken from himself the weariness and weakness of the flesh. Panoplied in strength, trophied in victory, he has already taken rank among those whom the King

counts worthy to be companioned eternally with His translated sons. He shall be seen by us in the flesh no more, but the lure of his life will ever constrain us toward that better life into which he has surely gone.

EDWIN R. GRAHAM, PUBLISHING AGENT OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CHICAGO

HAVING been associated with Dr. Eaton since the General Conference of 1904, I had learned to love and respect him as a friend, and to look up to him as a man of high moral character and as a true Christian. He was one of the commanding figures in Methodism, having occupied his position as Publishing Agent as long as any other man that has been elected to that position. He was a man of the greatest integrity, a wise and safe counselor; a man with whom it was a joy to be associated in business. It was always his desire to conduct as a Christian gentleman the business intrusted to his hands, and he expected all who were associated with him in business to measure up to his standard. He was honored by the Church, and never brought discredit upon her either through his work or his life. He was a man who stood for the best in everything, a man whose business integrity was beyond question, a man who stood ever ready to answer to the very best of his ability any call which the Church might make upon him. He was kindness itself. He always showed a brotherly spirit toward his associates. He was a man of affairs. Whenever he came into contact with the business world he was recognized as a

man of ability as well as one of high moral standards. I shall miss his kindly counsel and shall ever remember him as one of the best and truest friends I have been privileged to have. His work here is accomplished; God has called him to take up a greater work. My heart is heavy and filled with sorrow because we shall see him no more in the old walks.

SAMUEL H. PYE, FORMER PUBLISHING AGENT OF
THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

NEARLY forty years' association with Dr. Eaton in business gave me an insight into his rugged nature not often acquired in the life of any man. His unflinching fidelity to the interest committed to his care, his geniality toward all with whom he came in contact, and his unswerving loyalty to his associates in business were the striking characteristics of this noble man. I am grief-stricken over his departure, but have full confidence that I shall meet him in that better clime.

DR. WILLIAM V. KELLEY, EDITOR
THE METHODIST REVIEW

ONE of the stalwarts, a cedar of Lebanon. Everybody looked up to the tall, big brother of us all in the New York Book Concern. Big brained and big hearted. A Green Mountain man, built of granite. When he greeted Dewey, saying, "I, too, am from Vermont," the lively little admiral looked up at him and answered, "You look it." When he visited a Conference in Richmond a Virginia Negro

said: "Fo' de Lord, I thought it was General Robert Lee's ghost walking up de aisle." Something in Homer Eaton's body and spirit and speech and manner suggested Abraham Lincoln's tall, rugged figure, solemn face and homely humor. Take him for all in all, we never shall look up to his like again.

DR. LEVI GILBERT, EDITOR WESTERN
CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

DR. HOMER EATON deserves every good word spoken about him by eulogists in funeral and memorial services or put into print. He was in every sense the Christian gentleman, always self-controlled, deliberate, wise, far-seeing—his private and public character lofty and unimpeachable. He gave himself to his Church in devoted self-sacrifice long and admirably, and died at his post of duty while still wearing his armor.

In the important position to which he was called as one of the responsible heads of our great publishing interests, he acquitted himself from first to last with conspicuous credit. He so familiarized himself with the business, so mastered every detail, foresaw so many possible openings for improvement and expansion, and developed such practical capacity that the Church reposed supreme confidence in his management, and he never disappointed that trust. He was alert and full of plans and hence, in conjunction with his fellow-agents, had the satisfaction of seeing the business of the Book Concern brought to its present imposing proportions and very satisfactory profits. Such a

masterful man and capable leader and superintendent in any other similar business in the secular world would have received double or treble his salary compensation.

He is gone from us, but his memory will linger as that of a genuine, noble, hard-working, devoted laborer for Christ in our Methodist field—one whose power will long be felt in the personal influence he left behind him and in the prosperity and magnitude of a wonderful plant, dedicated to religious literature and the spreading throughout the world, by the printed page in book and journal, the inspiring truths of Christ's gospel. We invite a most careful perusal of the tributes herewith presented to his life and services—tributes which ought to inspire in every one of our readers sincere thankfulness to God for such a representative and promoter of our Methodist agencies, reaching from this continent to the ends of the earth.

DR. DAVID G. DOWNEY, BOOK EDITOR

HOMER EATON has been for so long a time a dominant figure in Methodism that it is difficult to think of our Church without him. Especially is this true with reference to Book Concern and missionary matters. Time kindly adjusts us to our losses, but it will be many years before the Church will easily adjust herself to the absence of this man of power. The secret of Dr. Eaton's influence was largely in his poise and reserve. He was not loquacious nor unduly assertive. His spirit was genial and his logic was not spiced with personalities. His noble

bearing gave one the sense of *power in repose*. Methodism long since learned to put confidence in his judgment and to accept without much question his wise counsels. Intrusted with heavy duties and large responsibilities, he met them with utter fidelity. He was true to every trust, and to-day his praise is in all the churches. Physically, mentally, and spiritually he was cast in heroic mold, and now that he is gone we know that men of his type are rare.

DR. JOHN T. MCFARLAND, EDITOR SUNDAY
SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS

DR. EATON was a man built after a large pattern, deeply grounded in Christian faith and principles, nobly proportioned in character and faculties, having a comprehensive grasp not only of the publications interest of the Church, but its worldwide program, wise in counsel, steadfast in purpose, loyal in friendship, a consecrated, large-hearted, practical Christian.

DR. JESSE W. JENNINGS, OF THE KANSAS
CITY DEPOSITORY

DR. HOMER EATON was one of the giants of Methodism in strength of character and Christian service. Verily he served his generation well, then "fell on sleep." There is no doubt in my mind but that the whole Church recognizes a great loss to the working forces, while the Master says, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord," to which welcome into the rest that remaineth to the people of God, all people respond Amen.

BURIAL SERVICE AT
ALBANY RURAL CEMETERY, ALBANY, N. Y.
APRIL 9, 1913

ADDRESS

BY REV. WILLIAM H. HUGHES

IN the year 1857, in the month of May, Troy Conference held its annual session in Pittsfield, Mass.

There were notable men members of that Conference in those days, such men as Tobias Spicer, John P. Newman, Seymour Coleman, the Starks brothers, the Hall brothers, Andrew Witherspoon, William Griffin, and others of like quality.

Among them was another, conspicuous for vigor of intellect and kindness of heart. It will not be inopportune for me to say a few words concerning this man of interesting history. He was a stalwart son of Vermont; he spent the major portion of his life in his own native town, trusted and honored by his neighbors.

Twice they elected him to represent them in the Legislature of the State, and it was currently talked that higher civil honors awaited his coming.

To him, however, there had come the clear and insistent call to the ministry. He was reluctant to enter the regular work because of the care of parents in advanced age. Licensed as a local preacher, he supplied churches more or less easily reached from his home; indeed, for two years he was "supply" pastor of the church in his own town. Even more, after he had united with the Conference he was appointed pastor of the same church—the welcomed confidant and counselor of his townsmen.

When forty-four years of age he united with Troy Conference, afterward transferred to the Vermont Conference (by a change in the Conference boundary).

He was a delegate to our General Conference and Presiding Elder of Burlington District.

Returning to Troy Conference, he served churches faithfully, and died a few miles from where we are now standing, and his body rests in this city of the dead.

This man rejoiced in the fellowship of his brethren, Conference sessions were a delight to him, but this session in 1857 was a great joy, for it was at this time this good man, Bennett Eaton, saw his two boys, Joel W. and Homer, enter the Conference, and doubtless with his uplifted hand he voted for their admission.

A great gladness to the father, and an event of no small moment to the Conference, for these two brothers rendered a half century of useful service, and have been unsurpassed in leadership in our councils.

In 1880 Troy Conference contributed a choice gift to wider Methodism, Methodism of America, Methodism of the World. The General Conference met that year in Cincinnati. It fell to my honorable lot to nominate Homer Eaton to represent the Second General Conference District in the Book Committee.

The Conference approved our choice and elected him.

He served eight years; his colleagues, impressed with his ability and courage, then elected him to be one of the Book Agents, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of the lamented John M. Phillips.

Each succeeding General Conference has continued him in this office. The General Conference of 1912,

while retiring men because of age, reëlected him one of the Agents.

And the Book Committee selected him to be General Agent, thus placing this man of many years in charge of the publishing interests of our great Church. I do not need to repeat what others have so well said of the unsurpassed success of this large task. I need only say Troy Conference has rejoiced in his achievements, and has been proud that he belonged to us; and he belongs to us still!

Of his work with us I may well speak: A sturdy, confident preacher of the gospel of our Lord. As a pastor, faithful and efficient. I know there are pastors and pastors, not all are alike. I know the sort of men that the laity ask for when they look for a man eminent for pastoral service. They seek a cheery, affable man, who, visiting from house to house, carries sunshine wherever he goes. I do not doubt they seek what they want, but I am inclined to congratulate the Church that now and then there comes to the charge a man whose chief qualification for pastoral helpfulness is the largeness of his personality—the man to whom the parishioners look, and not in vain, for aid in the hour of emergency, and in days of doubt, and find it in the mental and moral size of the pastor.

I know another man of whom his Conference brethren never thought as a superior pastor, but a broad-minded, close-observing layman declared, "He is the best pastor our Church ever had!" Homer Eaton belonged to this rare order of pastors.

Perhaps his finest service among us was given in the Presiding Eldership. There have been Presiding

Elders, there are District Superintendents. I have a generous hopefulness for my younger brethren who do now or may hereafter serve in this office, but I care to say they will do fairly well if they make the District Superintendency of the Twentieth Century equal to the Presiding Eldership of the Nineteenth.

The Presiding Elder, justly yet generously estimating the ability of his brethren, correctly gauging the needs of the charge, and then counseling the wisest possible adjustment of men to the work, does a great work; but oh, so much more, when now and then he gives a brother a margin of opportunity, assigning him a task a bit too big for him, but keeping in close touch with him and thus stimulating not only by his presence, but by words of wisdom and experience, enables the brother to accomplish more than he is able to do alone. That is the joy of the office! Homer Eaton, the Presiding Elder, was always in this big-brother business. When he went from us into the Agency of the Book Concern we thought we had only loaned him, but the Church took him as a gift and never returned him to us. Only now they bring back the remains of his fine physical form vacated by the great soul that so many years tenanted it.

The story of the Eatons is well-nigh ended. Only one lone woman remains. To her we tender our sincerest sympathy.

None of his colleagues in Church work mourn him more than we who have been comrades of his many years in our Conference.

I am lonely! I have followed so many dear friends to the grave. It was mine to recite the words of our

Ritual in committing the body of the blessed brother to the grave. I sought the divine grace upon Joel's heart when we bore his beloved Marion away. I voiced the tribute of the Conference at the funeral services of Joel; and now I join with others in our final burial services of our beloved Homer.

Two thoughts more and I close. The distinguishing quality of Homer Eaton in his work was his "repose." He did his tasks easily, and so often we thought he could do more if more was needed. He never seemed to reach the climax of his ability. He has gone into another life. I am not content to call it a life of rest. To my thought he has gone where service large enough for his great soul has been given him.

Once more it is a blessed privilege to be a minister of the gospel. It has added gladness for the Methodist preacher. Our fellowships are so intimate. I have chosen for my most intimate friends Methodist preachers. Homer Eaton was one of them. Farewell, dear brother! It shall be blessed when we meet again to part no more forever.

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